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Exeter Hall. December.

THIS is thoroughly a Christmas number; every piece, vocal and instrumental, having reference to this season. "A Christmas Thought," by J. L. Hatton, is an elegant and placid setting of some suitable words, by George Valentine. How so accomplished a musician as Mr. Hatton would treat such a subject may be easily inferred; and we need only say, therefore, that amateurs will find a religious feeling running throughout this little song which will render it acceptable to a Christmas or Sunday fire-side audience. "Hallelujah! Christ is King," a Christmas Hymn, by G. B. Allen, can scarcely lay claim to any originality; but it is smoothly written, and easy to sing. The Carol "Christmas comes, the time of gladness," is adapted to music by Gounod; and moves along perhaps as well as music not intended by the composer to express these words can be expected to do. Another Hymn for Christmas, "Our Saviour's birth," by Henry F. Henry, is a harmless series of chords, calling for no especial remark. Corelli's "Pastorale," in celebration of the Nativity, is made into an effective Pianoforte piece, by Dr. Rimbault; who also gives us, in his "Sunday Evenings at the Harmonium," some very good arrangements of old Carol tunes, many of which are full of character, especially the "Boar's Head Carol," and the English tune, "The First Noël," both of which are interesting specimens of these quaint old ditties.

ROBERT COCKS AND Co.

True Love Mine. Barcarole.*Rise, my Child.* A Song of Christmas.

Words and Music by Louisa Vance.

AMONGST the heap of songs, good, bad, and indifferent, which daily come before us, we select these, by a composer who is entirely unknown to us, but who may, if she persevere, add to the small store of elegant and poetical vocal music many compositions of infinitely more value than those now under notice. The Barcarole is full of character; and the peculiar rhythm of five bars gives a charming piquancy to the opening theme. The monotonous effect of the waving accompaniment is thoroughly in keeping with the subject; and the song is throughout instinct with grace and truthful expression. The "Song for Christmas" is a devotional and hopeful melody, accompanied with quavers, *pianissimo*, above the voice part. Here again is positive evidence of a musical mind not to be betrayed into conventional clap-trap. The harmonies are natural; and the modulations in sympathy with the words. The final "Amen," ending on the fifth of the key-note, has an excellent effect. We cordially commend these two songs to the notice of vocalists; and trust to meet with the composer again at no distant period.

Original Correspondence.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE MUSICAL TIMES.

SIR,—I am induced to trouble you with a few observations, in reply to Mr. J. Warman's letter in your last number. And first I would draw attention to the following facts.—

Two points were put forward for consideration in a communication signed "A St. Mark's Man," which appeared in your October number, viz.—

I. The following extract from my pamphlet on pointing (quoted only in part by the writer). "It is the clearly-marked melody, with its invariable metrical order, which forms the peculiar characteristic of the Anglican chant. In this element, the tone language is employed to express the ever-varying sentiment of the words to which the chant is applied."

II. The example inserted in the pamphlet for the purpose of illustrating its principles.

The statements on both these points were considered at length by me in the *Musical Times* of November. Your last number, however, contains a second letter, which cannot, I think, be termed with justice a reply to mine;

for, in place of meeting my explanations, first, it attributes to me a new theory, entirely different to that treated of in the pamphlet; secondly, it comprises a mere re-assertion (without support) of the writer's opinion as to the merits of the printed example.

Having made this necessary explanation, I proceed to speak more particularly of this last letter.

I. The statement marked I. (*supra*) together with what has been advanced subsequently upon it, are affirmed to support the following theory. "Tone language (i.e. music considered as an embellishment, or intensifier of ordinary utterance) should, when mated to a form of words giving change of sentiment, and consequently of language and accent, with an unvarying melody, be content to merge its own rhythm in that of the enunciation it adorns."

Now, whatever may be the precise meaning attached to the above (to me, I confess, unintelligible) statement, an examination of the pamphlet will show that this distortion receives no support therein; for it is evident, first, that by tone language, I understand simply musical sounds abstractedly considered, and without any *necessary* reference to words, whereas the writer distinguishes separately tone language, melody, and a form of words, speaking as he does of the first of these being mated to the two last; secondly, that the writer has been misled by his partial quotation; the omitted expression, "invariable metrical order," alone would have prevented so complete a misconception of my notion of the chant form, as that it is simply "a melodic succession of tones, without either accent or regular time, and dependent for these latter solely upon the rhythm of the particular sentences to which taken; thirdly, that the pamphlet is most explicit on this point; for it defines the chant to be a "fixed form," made up of recitative and melodic phrases, these latter consisting of "accented and unaccented notes in alternate succession."

II. The writer asserts that, unless based upon the above or a similar theory, the printed example "can have small claim to be considered as one in which 'all the emphatic words are placed in positions suitable to the correct expression of their natural emphasis.'"

With regard to this point, it should be observed, first, that the example is presented in an isolated form, in which the bearing of the pamphlet upon it cannot be perceived; secondly, that an analysis of the example was given in my last letter, which has yet to be considered by the writer.

Bearing in mind, sir, the difficulty of obtaining back numbers of your valuable journal, I would beg leave to conclude these remarks, by repeating in substance what has been already advanced on this head.

The following is the example alluded to:—

The Lord *declared* his *sal* | *uá* | *tion* : ||
His *righteousness* hath he *openly shewed* in the *sight* |
of the | *hæa* | *then* ||

Here the emphatic words are in italics; the accent is marked with acute accent. Of these emphatic words, it will be seen, first, that *declared*, *righteousness*, *openly shewed*, and *sight*, are assigned to the recitation note, and thus, "the correct expression of their natural emphasis" is secured in performance; secondly, that to each of the remaining emphatic syllables (viz., the first syllable of *heathen* and the second syllable of *salvation*), an accented note is given; thirdly, that the particle *of*, though not emphatic, receives an accented note, for it is capable of bearing an accent, a fact shown by the similar treatment generally of this and the like words; fourthly, that the last syllables of *heathen* and *salvation* represent respectively the two closes of the chant form, being the final syllables in each great division of a verse.

I am, sir, yours very faithfully,

JOHN TAYLOR.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. C. Boucher.—*We perfectly agree with your estimate of the Kyrie in question. It absolutely overflows with errors. But seeing the melody is moderately good*